

## ABSTRACT

Alteration of a Standard Commands for Programmable Instrumentation (SCPI) command set for instrument control. In representative embodiments, each command  
5 of the command set includes a different combination of SCPI grammatical elements; the SCPI grammatical elements are organized hierarchically in a tree data structure; and the tree has nodes with each node comprising one of the SCPI grammatical elements. A node to alter is selected., and an alteration to the selected node is specified. Access to the selected node, as well as to any descendant nodes of the  
10 selected node is restricted; the selected node is altered in accordance with the specified alteration, wherein the alteration of the selected node is performed at runtime; and the access restriction to the selected node and to any descendant nodes of the selected node is removed, wherein the access restriction, node alteration, and access removal are performed while the instrument is operational.